



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

## Ahead of the Curve: Following Kennedy Call, Buffalo-Niagara Int'l Airport to be Among First in Upstate to Offer Lactation Room Inside Terminal for New Mothers

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY October 6, 2015



*Following Introduction of Legislation in State Senate, NFTA Takes the Lead and Voluntarily Plans to Offer Lactation Room for New Mothers at Buffalo-Niagara International Airport*

*With Studies Showing Barely 8 Percent of Airports Have Designated Lactation Rooms, Kennedy Applauds NFTA, Cites Them as Example for Airports Across State & Nation*

BUFFALO, N.Y. – Following his introduction of legislation in the New York State Senate to require airports in New York State to offer lactation room for new mothers, Senator Tim

Kennedy (D-Buffalo), announced today that the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) has voluntarily decided to offer this service before the bill has even been voted on. In August, Kennedy stood with advocates at Women and Children's Hospital in Buffalo to announce the introduction of legislation that would require major airports in New York State to set aside a lactation room inside terminals. Citing growing numbers of women across the state and country who are choosing the breastfeed, Kennedy declared that mothers in New York State ought to have a right to have a sanitary and private place to nurse their child, especially when traveling.

Following the introduction of Kennedy's legislation, the NFTA's Aviation Committee, which is responsible for the management of the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport (BNIA) and the Niagara Falls International Airport, immediately began planning for the introduction of a lactation room at BNIA, which sees over 3 million enplanements every year. Following the guidelines suggested by the state, the private room will include a sink with running water, a shelf, a table and chair. It will be located in the airport's east concourse, across from Gate 14.

"The NFTA has once again proven themselves to be an industry leader in both the state and the nation," said **Senator Tim Kennedy**. "Rather than waiting for this legislation to pass and be signed into law by the Governor, the NFTA has chosen to embrace this change, making Buffalo-Niagara International Airport among the first in the state to offer a lactation room for new mothers. I applaud this progressive decision, and I urge airports across the state to follow the NFTA's lead."

"In its continuing effort to address the varied needs of its customers, the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport is ready to commence construction of a lactation room for nursing mothers in the terminal," announced **Kimberley A. Minkel, NFTA's executive director**. "I am very pleased that we have been able to identify space in the terminal to accommodate nursing moms by providing a private, clean and secure room for

their use.”

“As I stressed when I stood with Senator Kennedy in August, we have to build a more breastfeeding-friendly culture so that more families can take advantage of the numerous health benefits for both women and children,” said **Dr. Stephen Turkovich, Chief Medical Officer at Women and Children’s Hospital of Buffalo**. “The NFTA is doing the right thing by voluntarily offering a lactation room for new mothers at Buffalo-Niagara International Airport, and I hope that more airports throughout the state will make the same change.”

“I commend Senator Kennedy and the NFTA for working so hard and so quickly to open a lactation room for breastfeeding mothers at the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport,” said **local mother and owner of Rachel’s Remedies, LLC, Rachel Jackson**. “Breast milk is the gold standard for infant nutrition, and the health benefits of breastfeeding for both the baby and mother are seemingly endless. I am thrilled that the Senator and NFTA understand the importance of this issue, and are making these accommodations available to nursing mothers, *prior* to the enactment of the legislation. The result of this collaboration will enable mothers and their babies to stay healthier.”

The airport is covering all construction costs. Construction on the room is currently underway, and is expected to be complete by the end of October.

Kennedy’s legislation requires airports operated by a city or county, or airports which see more than one million enplanements annually will be required to set aside a room or other location by 2017 that allows mothers to privately nurse their children or pump breast milk. The Buffalo Niagara International Airport would therefore fall under the purview of this legislation. Kennedy’s original announcement also noted that 80% of newborn infants in New York State were breastfed in 2011, slightly higher than the national average of 79%. However, this number drops significantly within six months of birth, when only 16.5% of

infants are solely breastfed. With many mothers required to travel for work, the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport's new lactation room will provide a much-needed service for moms on the go.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### 2015-S6026

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Mandates the provision of lactation accommodations in airports

August 07, 2015

In Senate Committee **Transportation**

Sponsored by **Timothy M. Kennedy**

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